

Equip: An invitation to bless the Lord

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On a Saturday evening, I was on the way to my car in the driveway since I had only so many hours left to get my errands done.

My neighbor's son playing on the other side of the street looked at me and yelled "six seven," a catchphrase turned meme online now being repeated often by children and teens.

I was so excited and joyful to be included in a thing reserved for younger people, I yelled back to him "six seven," matching the joy the boy across the street exhibited.

When I was a teenager, I wasn't too big on using slang. I wasn't popular or cool, at least not in the sense I thought other kids might have measured it.

But I knew how to speak the vernacular to fit in like most of my peers, and I had a lot of fun making up my own versions of what I considered cool.

And yet, I still felt like I was a part of a community. Once I entered high school, I found my people, kids who geeked out at some of the same stuff I was into.

The invitation led me into relationships I still have to this day.

My high school and college friends and I were in on the jokes and the humor of my generation, from funny internet videos to a random line from a movie or an anime series.

I took a phrase like "the bomb dot com" and made it my own, like "the bomb dot org."

Sure, it was lame, but it was mine. I even took phrases and made my own thing.

Those same friends also share with me the joy and excitement that comes from considering how God cares for us.

We have had many visits where we sat together over a cup of coffee and started talking about the Lord, which would inevitably lead to one of us shouting an “amen” or, “Won’t he do it?”

Those exclamations keep me excited, hyped and praising.

All these interactions, whether kid stuff or the things of God, make me reflect on my own genuine and joyful way to praise and worship the Lord.

A look into Psalm 103

In Psalm 103, a lively praise is taking place. The text celebrates God’s gracious attributes and a reminder of man’s fragility and our need for him to forgive, heal and redeem.

We also see our many reasons to “bless the Lord.” Verses 3 through 5 gives us a glimpse into our purpose behind the praise—who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from destruction, who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, who satisfies your mouth with good things—so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s.



Walter and Anita on Praising the Lord.
(By Kendall Lyons)

No wonder there’s so much exuberant praise coming from the writer of the Psalm 103. David is fully aware his youthful vigor and strength come from

the Lord.

It is no coincidence Isaiah 40:31 might come to mind when you consider the results that come from waiting on the Lord.

There have been times in my life when praise was difficult to give. Life's challenges and pitfalls may cause you and I to forget God is still good as we go through the bad.

Verses 6 through 10 offer that encouragement and reminder of why blessing the Lord still makes sense.

We're reminded God executes righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed.

He made a way for Moses and the children of Israel

He's merciful, gracious, slow to anger, will not stay angry and has not dealt with us according to our sins nor punished us according to our iniquities.

And for the readers who might skip ahead, verse 17 offers up that hope all of us need when faced with dark times: "But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting, on those who fear him, and his righteousness to children's children."

When we bless God

The very idea and call to bless God fascinates me.

How does one bless the creator of heaven and earth, author and finisher of our faith, the King of kings and Lord of lords?

When we consider God's enduring mercies and all his character traits and the fact he sent his Son, Jesus, the way we bless God starts to become obvious.

Like the little boy across my street who yelled out to me to say hello in his generation's speech, we get to use our voices and "all that is within" to acknowledge God and his presence, provision and power.

And we get to do it with joy and excitement. And why wouldn't I be? I understand God's grace is his unmerited favor—giving to me that which I do not deserve. I also understand God's mercy is his withholding of what I do deserve.

All of us need God's grace and mercy.

This is the kind of worship, the kind of posture when blessing the Lord, that pulls me out of self and into a stronger relationship with God.

Kendall Lyons, news reporter for the Baptist Standard, is a writer, minister and cartoonist who publishes on his Substack page [Kendall's Comics](#). He is also the illustrator of [Your Identity in Christ: Finding Who You Are in Who He Is](#) by David Sanchez. The views expressed in this resource article are those of the author.